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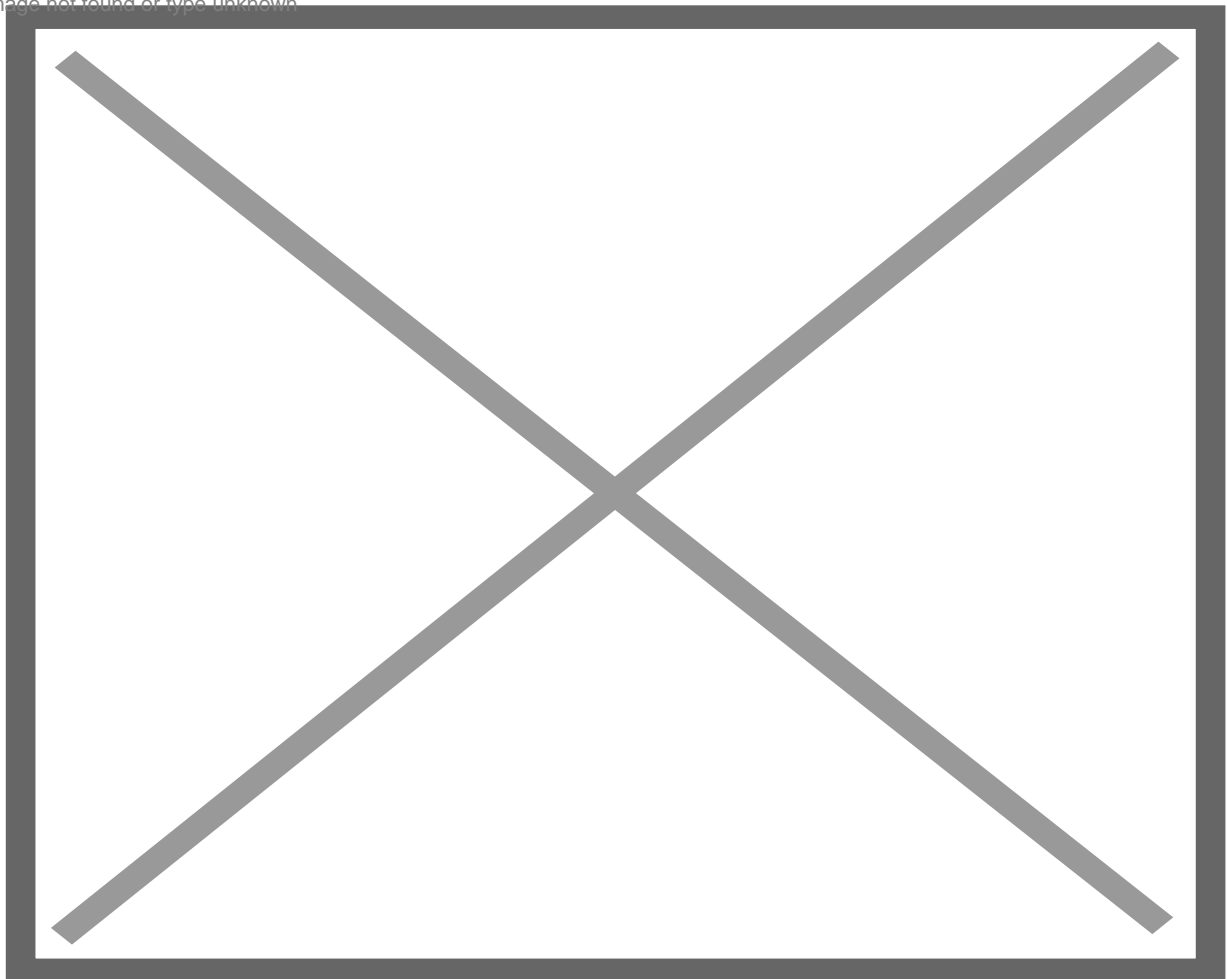
Territory to Receive Over \$22 Million for Marine Terminal Upgrades at Container Port on St. Croix

Modernization Efforts to Double Container Capacity at Marine Terminal

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Wilfred “Bomba” Allick marine terminal in St. Croix, known locally as the Container Port.
By. THE V.I. PORT AUTHORITY

The Maritime Administration (MARAD) of the U.S. Department of Transportation on Friday announced a significant investment of over \$22 million in the U.S. Virgin Islands for the enhancement of the Wilfred “Bomba” Allick marine terminal in St. Croix, known locally as the Container Port. This initiative, part of President Joe Biden's comprehensive Investing in America agenda, aims to bolster capacity and efficiency across America's ports as a critical strategy under the broader economic concept of Bidenomics.

This federal funding is geared towards improving coastal seaports, inland river ports, and those on the Great Lakes, supporting nearly \$17 billion in infrastructure upgrades through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Such development is critical for handling the over 2.3 billion short tons of domestic and international commerce transported by water annually in the United States. The allocated funds are expected to fortify supply chain reliability, enhance workforce opportunities, expedite goods movement, and augment the safety and resilience of port operations.

U.S. Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg highlighted the importance of ports in the American supply chain, stating, “Everything from the food we eat to the cars we drive to the lumber and steel used to build our homes passes through America's ports.” He emphasized that these investments would lead to faster movement of goods through ports, resulting in cleaner air and the creation of well-paid jobs.

The Biden administration's response to pandemic-induced supply chain pressures has led to a dramatic reduction in container ship backlogs and a decrease in global shipping costs, signaling progress in the resilience and efficiency of U.S. ports, according to the U.S. Dept. of Transportation.

The Port Infrastructure Development Program, through which the funding is being channeled, offers planning support and capital funding to enhance the capacity and efficiency of ports. With this round of funding, over \$172.8 million is dedicated to improving 26 small ports. The focus is on promoting reliable and efficient freight movement, thus energizing local and regional economies and mitigating environmental health impacts.

Maritime Administrator Ann Phillips underscored the broader implications of port modernization, saying it extends “well beyond the maritime domain.” She remarked that the funding is a step towards more reliable goods movement, bolstered supply chain resiliency, and the mitigation of negative environmental and public health impacts from port operations.

The projects selected for funding were evaluated based on criteria including safety, efficiency, resilience, economic vitality, workforce development, sustainability, and alignment with President Biden’s Justice40 Initiative, the Dept. of Transportation said.

In the U.S. Virgin Islands, the \$22.4 million allocated for the Wilfred “Bomba” Allick Terminal will enable extensive modernization, including pile cap replacement, concrete and steel repairs, and upgrades to mooring foundations and bollards. The refurbishment will notably double the container capacity of the terminal, enhancing the operational efficiency of the port in St. Croix.